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Doctors Joshua and Tanda Lane are board certified in dermatology. In addition, Dr. Joshua Lane is one of only 30 fellowship-trained Mohs surgeons in Georgia and the only one in Columbus. We are pleased to introduce our Physician Assistants, Anna Summerlin, PA-C and Mark Spatz, PA-C, both of whom previously practiced dermatology in the Metro Atlanta area.

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Alternate Delegates: Larry E. Brightwell, MD, Marvyn Cohen, MD, Thomas Ellison, MD and John D. Watson, Jr., MD

Ad position is at the sole discretion of the Editorial Board.

Members are urged to submit articles for publication in The Bulletin. Deadline for copy is the 11th of the month preceding date of issue. The Bulletin of the Muscogee County Medical Society is the official monthly publication of the Muscogee County Medical Society, 2300 Manchester Expressway, Suite F-7, Columbus, GA 31904. All material for publication should be sent to the Managing Editor not later than the 11th of the month. Advertising requirements and rates upon request. Opinions expressed in The Bulletin, including editorials, are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect policies of the Society unless stated. Advertisements in this magazine do not necessarily represent endorsement or support by the Muscogee County Medical Society.
Whenever the subject of education comes up in the press, interviews with high school seniors or college students frequently follow, indicating what an appalling lack of knowledge of science, literature, history or mathematics exists in our nation. The “solar system” was commonly called a new energy system which you put on your roof. Columbus was noted as an “old time baseball player”, “a detective on TV”, or worse an “old racist who tortured the Cleveland Indians” (I’m not making this up). In science subjects some thought the sun revolved around the earth, that acid rain burnt up trees and disfigured people. One kid thought Shakespeare was the guy who invented the rod and reel (at least a logical idea). For the non-fisherman there is a fishing equipment company called “Shakespeare”.

Our city government and school board has come up with the idea that we need a “fine arts school” to teach kids about music and art. While this sounds like a desirable and relatively harmless project, it diverts millions of dollars from teaching essential subjects which prepare students for future professions and business careers. Professional artists and musicians have a notoriously hard time making a living. It is deceptive to make young people think of such careers. We have an extraordinarily fine music school at Columbus State University. This is the place for talented music students. Music appreciation should be taught in grade and high schools as it once was forty or fifty years ago.

Another casualty of the education system locally is the demise of vocational training in high school. All students are not ready to be CEOs or for the classical professions and would be happier in a practical training course like the ones that used to be taught at Jordan Vocational High School. Columbus Technical College is another wonderful local asset which these high school students could then utilize. The notion has arisen in the US that a college education is for absolutely everyone regardless of ability. It is close to being called, by our semi-educated politicians, an “entitlement”. The result of “everyone” going to college is the diluting of quality and standards or “dumbing down” of curricula. This situation apparently suits the denizens of academe as the leveling of society in all aspects is dear to them. It brings to mind a sentence from a song in Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta The Gondoliers; “When everybody is somebody, then nobody is anybody”.

ON THE OTHER HAND

James H. Venable, M.D.
Patient Referral Service: Free to our members and the public this great benefit provides many referrals each year to our member physicians.

Membership Directory: Premier information resource on physicians, facilities, professional referrals, and recognition. The directory contains important reference information on each member. A great marketing tool for your practice.

Bulletin: Monthly newsletter features news and information on the Muscogee County Medical Society, its members and issues and topics affecting the practice of medicine. You may submit articles or announcements as a member.

Continuing Medical Education: MCMS offers continuing medical education credit hours during the year at a special meeting with an approved topic.

Meet and network: We have four yearly meetings with nice venues, good food, and interesting speakers. We know that physicians are busy and want some social time to meet members and network.

Physician Phone Listing: The Muscogee County Physician’s Listing or “yellow card” as it is known in the community lists members’ phone numbers and those of all physicians and hospitals in Columbus. It is distributed to all medical offices and hospitals. Member receive free copies and also their names in bold.

Website: We have a website with announcements and that also has articles from “The Bulletin” as well as photos from our events. www.muscogeemedical.org

Mailing List and Label Service: Labels and full mailing lists are available for medically oriented correspondence.

Legislative: MCMS provides legislative information for our members to inform them on issues relevant to medicine. Our Legislative Committee monitors legislation and regulatory activities in our state and we make every effort to bring legislators and candidates for office to Columbus to meet with us.

Media Liaison: MCMS works on a regular basis with the media in responding to request for information and interview opportunities with members.

Speakers Bureau: Our speakers bureau actively participates in speaking engagements throughout the community.

Muscogee County Medical Society
2300 Manchester Expressway, Suite F-7 • Columbus, Georgia 31904
www.muscogeemedical.org
706-322-1254 phone • 706-327-7480 fax
Meaningful Use Electronic Medical Records

We are approaching the end of the first year of the incentives program for the Affordable Care Act as it relates to meaningful use of electronic medical records. This act provides incentive payments for the implementing of electronic medical records of $43,000 for Medicare Providers and $62,000 for Medicaid Providers. And following the carrot is the stick. That would be a penalty of around 5% of Medicare billings if you are not fully implemented in a system of MU EMR by 2017.

The devil is in the details. To achieve meaningful use and certification, you must meet all of the criteria that are currently set-up. First of all, the software must be CCHIT certified, which only means that the vendor believes they can provide a system that can technically accomplish meaningful use. Having a CCHIT certified record does not mean you get the incentive. It only means that you can now begin the process of achieving meaningful use on your software’s dashboard. You have to be able to do “Computerized Physician Order Entry,” which generally means that you will be adopting your vendor’s financial billing software (or double your workload). You have to be able to E-Prescribe, and maintain Medication List and Allergies is the format of your E-Prescribe module. Essentially that means going from script like is done on Microsoft Word to data chains like is done on Microsoft Access. You have to provide “Patient Education” handouts to at least 10% of your encounters. You have to send out “Patient Reminders” to about 33% of your patient pool during the 90 day reporting period. This would be like a reminder letter to come in for a Pap smear or other periodic evaluation. “Patient Requested Copies” have to be done within 2 business days at a predetermined threshold. Labs must be “structured” which means an interface with your reference lab, as well as achieving certain formats on in-house labs. This is to provide trending. You now have to document a “Summary of Care on Transition of Care.” This relates to communication with the practice of a referring provider or consultant provider, including medication reconciliation. A web portal must be provided to the patient and a Summary of Care uploaded to that portal within 48 hours of a visit. To program all of this data into a system at the time of a visit will require about 20 minutes of time.

The next area that needs to be worked on is the CMS Quality Reporting Dashboard, or PQRI. This is where you additionally document various variables as it relates to a condition, prevention, or other quality measure. For example, an overweight 66 year old diabetic who smokes comes in for an evaluation. And they also have some heart disease and a little heart failure. Now using HCPCS codes for Procedures or Professional Services (g-codes) and CPT Category II codes...
(0001f-7025f) you will set up for reporting all of the quality variables and actions that were taken. Currently this is by attestation, but later will be by reporting on the 1500 form (billing form). So for this person who came in I must record a body mass index (BMI) and whether it requires a follow-up plan. Add to that pneumococcal and influenza vaccine status. Add to that smoking status and intervention. Add to that colorectal screening documentation. Add to that 8 more variables that deal with the diabetes. Add to that whether their LDL cholesterol is at the goal for their risk factors. Add to that 5 factors dealing with their Coronary Artery Disease. Add to that two factors dealing with their heart failure. If I do all of that and electronically prescribe their medications, I get a bonus of 92 cents for a level IV office visit.

Later in 2012, we will transition into Level II, which will add a whole new degree of difficulty to a visit. I believe a Level III follows that.

So, what is the likelihood of purchasing EMR software and achieving meaningful use through the Level III? What is the likelihood that this EMR software will make you more efficient in seeing patients? And what is the likelihood that you won’t be paying the 5% penalty by 2017 for not achieving meaningful use? In addition to the upcoming Medicare cuts, I think CMS has been very clever in engineering another 5% cut in 2017.
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THERE’S A GUIDING PHILOSOPHY TO MAG MUTUAL’S EFFORTS to defend your reputation: *Whatever it takes.* Claims committees staffed 100% by physicians. An exhaustive review and medical opinion for every claim filed. Outside help, when needed, to prepare a physician for deposition. Deep exploration of the best available expert witnesses. A detailed game plan weeks before trial. Testing the defense with focus groups. Mock trials. Continuous involvement of MAG Mutual’s claims specialists.

Much of the above represents an “expense” to other carriers – an expense they often don’t want to pay. So, they’re often inclined to settle. **But settling just to avoid cost isn’t in the best interest of the physician, whose reputation, life and livelihood are at stake.**

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We welcome our new members to the Muscogee County Medical Society:

Edet O. Bassey, M.D. received his M.D. from the University of Calabar, College of Medical Services, Nigeria. He also received graduate medical education at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York and was in the residency program in internal medicine. He is Staff Physician to the Muscogee County Prison and Jail. We welcome Dr. Bassey to Muscogee County Medical Society.

Jefferson C. Jones, II, M.D. earned his B.S. at Shorter College, in Rome, GA and graduated Magna Cum Laude. He received his M.D. at Mercer University School of Medicine, in Macon. He was an OB/GYN resident at the Medical Center of Central Georgia. We welcome Dr. Jones to the society.

Jeffrey K. Kingsley, D.O. received his B.S. from the University of Scranton and an M.S. in biochemistry. His received his medical degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and his MBA from Emory University Goizeuta Business School. He completed his residency in Family Medicine with Columbus Regional Healthcare. He holds faculty positions at Medical College of Georgia. He founded Southeast Regional Research Group and conducts research and clinical trials there. We welcome Dr. Kingsley to Muscogee County Medical Society.

Norman S. Luton, Jr., M.D. graduated from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa and received his M.D. from the University of Alabama, Birmingham. He was an intern and resident at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson. He also did a residency at Marshall School of Medicine, Huntington, West Virginia. Welcome Dr. Luton.
James E. McGrory, M.D. graduated with a B.S., Summa Cum Laude, from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa and earned is M.D. at Vanderbilt University. He did his internship and residency at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota and a fellowship at the Texas Back Institute in Plano. He is Board Certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. Welcome Dr. McGrory.

Michael James Rallo, M.D. graduated from the University of Illinois with a B.A. in 1971 and The Peoria School of Medicine 1975. He had a family practice residency at St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria from 1975 - 1978. He is now the Director and CMO of Columbus Hospice here and certified by the FAAFP and FAAHPM. Welcome Dr. Rallo.

Emily K. Snodgrass, M.D. graduated from Henderson State University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, Summa Cum Laude, with a B.S. in 2006. She graduated from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Little Rock in 2010 completing her M.D. She is currently in her second year as a resident in The Medical Center’s Family Practice Residency Program and sponsored by Kendall Handy, M.D. Welcome Dr. Snodgrass.

Timothy Villegas, M.D. received a BS degree from in Biological Sciences from Cornell University and an M.D. from the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He served a medical internship and residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium. He is an OB/GYN and is certified by the FACOG. We welcome Dr. Villegas to our society.
48 Hours.
It’s about time.

“We will see your patient within 48 hours of their cancer diagnosis.”
- Jack Tidwell, MD
St. Francis Earns Chest Pain Center Re-accreditation
St. Francis received re-accreditation as a Chest Pain Center from the Society of Chest Pain Centers November 22. The hospital is one of only 18 accredited Chest Pain Centers in Georgia and one of 675 in the United States. St. Francis demonstrated its expertise and commitment to high quality care for heart attack patients by meeting or exceeding stringent criteria while undergoing an on-site evaluation by a review team from the Society of Chest Pain Centers.

Accreditation as a chest pain center ensures health care consumers that a facility meets clinical standards identified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) under their Value-based Purchasing program. Heart disease continues as the leading cause of death in the United States. The most common heart disease in the United States is coronary heart disease, which often appears as a heart attack. In 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 785,000 Americans had a new coronary attack, and about 470,000 had a recurrent attack. An American will have a coronary event about every 25 seconds, and about one every minute will die from one.

Dr. Bo Lewis Named Georgia Shoulder and Elbow Society President
Robert “Bo” Lewis, MD, will begin a three-year term as president of the Georgia Shoulder and Elbow Society January 1. Among his immediate responsibilities will be to serve as chairman of the group’s spring conference April 28 at Callaway Gardens. The one-day conference, focusing on “Shoulder Instability: Diagnosis and Treatment,” will offer 6 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. The cost is $150. For more information about the group or its spring conference, contact Dr. Lewis at lewisr@sfhga.com.

Hall of Fame Quarterback Bart Starr to Speak at the Butler Service and Leadership Award Dinner January 24
Former Green Bay Packers quarterback Bart Starr will speak at the eighth annual Butler Service and Leadership Award dinner January 24. Starr led the Packers to five National Football League titles and two Super Bowl championships. He is a member of the Professional Football Hall of Fame. This year’s award will honor Dr. George Lipscomb, a radiologist who has served Columbus area residents for almost 50 years. During the past five decades, he has exemplified the same leadership qualities and outstanding community service that characterized Dr. Clarence C. Butler’s practice of medicine.

The black-tie gala will be held at the Columbus Convention and Trade Center. It will be hosted by the St. Francis Hospital and St. Francis Foundation Boards of Trustees. For reservations, call the St. Francis Foundation at 706-653-9375 or visit www.wecareforlife.com.
St. Francis Announces 2012-2013 Medical Executive Committee

St. Francis announced its 2012-2013 Medical Executive Committee in December. William Taylor, MD, will serve as chief of staff; Bipin Patel, MD, will serve as chief of staff elect; and Rajinder Chhokar, MD, will serve as past chief of staff. Charles Scarbrough, MD, will be chief of surgery; Joe Lewis, MD, will be chief of medicine; and Bhushit Dixit, MD, will be chief of psychiatry. Other committee members are John Abernathy, MD, radiology chief; Raj Alappan, MD, nephrology chief; Steve Beaty, MD, ophthalmology chief; Michael Borkat, MD, general surgery chief; H. Belk Brooks, MD, cardiovascular chief; Bruce Carr, MD, critical care chief; Ben Cheek, MD, GYN chief; William Fortson, MD, gastroenterology chief; John Henderson, MD, family medicine chief; Thomas Isenovski, emergency medicine chief; Willey Killorin, MD, urology chief; Chris Lee, MD, internal medicine chief; Edwin Page, MD, ENT chief; Mahesh Patel, MD, cardiology chief; Carlos Perez, MD, hospital medicine chief; Gary Rogers, MD, anesthesia chief; Chris Tidwell, MD, pulmonary chief; Thomas Walsh, MD, spine and neurology chief; and Frank Willett, MD, pathology chief. Additionally, committee chairmen are Terry Cone, MD, credentials committee; Andrew Dickens, MD, quality excellence committee; Chris Kiggins, epidemiology committee; and Richard Morse, MD, CME committee.

Dr. Mark Smith to Speak on Eye Disease at January 26
Primetime Seniors Program

Dr. Mark Smith, a board-certified optometrist with the West Georgia Eye Care, will speak on eye diseases, such as cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration at a free Primetime Seniors educational event January 26. The lecture will be held from 11 a.m.-noon at Health Matters of St. Francis. For more information or registration, call 706-596-4030. Primetime Seniors is a free program for individuals age 55 and older.

January Educational Opportunities

St. Francis will offer these educational opportunities in January:

**Breast Cancer Conference:** Friday, January 13, 7-8 a.m., St. Francis Hospital Boardroom (first floor). A breakfast buffet will be provided. For more information, contact Ruby Gladney at 706-660-6096 or gladneyr@sfhga.com.

**Cancer Conference:** Wednesday, January 18, 12:30-1:30 p.m., St. Francis Hospital Boardroom (first floor). Lunch will be provided. A reservation is not required. For more information, contact Ruby Gladney at 706-660-6096 or gladneyr@sfhga.com.

**GI Conference:** Tuesday, January 24, 6-8 p.m., Meeting Rooms B. Dinner will be provided. Please call Deana Berger at 706-320-2701 with names of cases that you would like to present.

*St. Francis Hospital is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians. St. Francis Hospital designates this live activity for a maximum number of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.*
ST. FRANCIS FOUNDATION PRESENTS

Dr. Clarence C. Butler Service and Leadership Award Dinner

honing

Dr. George E. Lipscomb

Tuesday, January 24, 2012
Cocktails - 6 p.m. | Dinner - 7 p.m.
Columbus Convention & Trade Center

Featured Guest Speaker

BART STARR
former Green Bay Packers quarterback and member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

For additional information, please contact the St. Francis Foundation at 706.653.9375 or www.wecareforlife.com.
Medical Association of Georgia- Board of Directors Meeting
October 14, 2011 Callaway Gardens
Frederick Flandry, M.D. – Director To MAG

II. Mega Issues

The Composite Medical Board meets the first Thursday and Friday of each month and is open to the public. MAG representatives go to make recommendations to them. Physicians need to keep up their renewals. This is very important but hard to straighten out after it has lapsed. Most of GCMB complaints are from criminals (in the penal system). If you get a summons do respond to it and keep them informed of the process. Be sure to document all problems and send a letter of termination to the patient as soon as possible. 43% of complaints are about quality of treatment and most do not result in disciplinary action.

Other actions are issues with physician impairment, prescribing violations, boundary issues, unprofessional behavior, mental or physical impairment, chemically impaired or traffic violations. If you get a board order against you, follow the demands of it and don’t practice again until treatment ends, especially if it is for drug abuse or alcohol treatment. Don’t throw away mail from composite medical board orders or letters, they do not send junk mail.

The Treasurer says we are looking for a new auditor, nonprofits, 1099s, investment losses, emergency funds are depleted so we want to build that back up. There are also concerns about recruitment and retention of members by MAG.

There was a discussion about discounts for large groups, they get discounts only if all join, as much a 35% but right now they get 20%. MAG would like to increase that. Some physicians the solo practitioners said they don’t get anything but the emphasis was on how much money MAG can get if a large practice of 20 or more gets all members to join.

Proposed Legislative Agenda

Preserving physician autonomy: Nurse Practitioners are lobbying to have more supervisory power and prescribing abilities. Psychologists have lobbied to have the ability to make suggestions or recommendations about what medications to use for patients. This puts a liability on the physician either way. We see no positives on this one since psychologists just do not have the training to make these types of decisions.

Medicaid: Ensuring that payments are adequate and reducing the administrative burdens is two of the goals we want to reach on Medicaid
issues. This will get worse with more patients coming onto the Medicaid rolls in the future. Physicians need to promote quality medicine and the importance of the relationship between physicians and their patients. The Supreme Court will rule now or in the Spring, but the state still needs to decide what to do about health insurance exchanges. Dr. DeLoach is on the State’s committee to study this.

**Tort Reform:** We need to continue to educate legislators on tort reform. We need a different standard in place for emergency physicians. Pain and suffering caps need to be changed but this needs a majority of legislators to take this to vote as a constitutional amendment. It would need a public relations campaign to bring this to the public arena.

**Health Insurance:** As with Medicaid we are working with the state and third party payers and insurers being in charge of credentialing. These are just some of the many issues to be dealt with.

**Graduate Medical Education:** For medical students, residency has the biggest impact on where you practice not where you go to medical school. We need a place in Georgia for these students to get training so they don’t go to another state. Only 9% of medical students from Georgia will stay here and practice. There are only 450 slots for training within Georgia.

**Accountable care:** Todd Williamson gives us support in this effort. We donot hear much support for the physicians from the AMA. The AMA did come to GA to talk to physicians here about their objectives. Dr. Bailey spoke”about the need to right the ship” nationally in regards to the sanctity of patient-physician relationship and the right for the private practicing physicians to practice medicine with freedom and without federal regulation-coalitions.

The BOD approved Mauldin and Jenkins as MAG’s new tax preparation/auditing services firm, while the HOD gave the executive director, president and treasurer the authority to negotiate membership discounts for groups with more than 200 eligible physicians.
UPCOMING EVENTS

MUSCOGEE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY
2012

SAVE THE DATE!
Wednesday, Jan 18th
Tapas and Wine Tasting
Big Eddy Club
6:30 p.m.
Learn about fine wines and
how they are paired with foods
Enjoy tapas prepared by Chef Rocco!

Please note:

Kevin McPherson, MD,
Psychological Associates

Please Change
Phone # on the “Physicans List” is wrong
Correct phone: 706-653-6841

Send all announcement and notices to Lisa Venable
lisavenable@muscogeemedical.org
or
Call 706-322-1254
Columbus Regional Appoints New President and CEO
Charles A. (Chuck) Stark, FACHE, has been named President and Chief Executive Officer of Columbus Regional Healthcare System. His appointment is effective Feb. 6, 2012. He succeeds Larry Sanders, who retired as Chairman and CEO of Columbus Regional Sept. 30, after 30 years with the organization.

Mr. Stark, a native of Cincinnati, Ohio, currently serves as President and CEO of Firelands Regional Health System in Sandusky, Ohio, a three-hospital integrated health care delivery system. He has led the system since 2004. During his tenure, he led system acquisitions and initiated a $156.9 million expansion and renovation project. Firelands Regional Health System has been listed in two of the last three years as a Top 100 Hospital by *Modern Healthcare* magazine in that publication’s annual “Best Places to Work” survey. During his tenure, specific service lines of the system also have achieved top quality and consumer preference rankings in state and national surveys.

Mr. Stark has more than 25 years of experience in hospital and health system leadership. Before joining Firelands Regional Health System in 2004, he spent 13 years with HealthSouth Corp. in progressively responsible leadership roles in Texas, Virginia and Alabama, ultimately serving as Senior Vice President with oversight of the acute care hospital division with facilities in Alabama and Florida. Mr. Stark also previously served for six years with Humana, Inc. in the hospital division, holding senior leadership assignments in Florida and Texas.

“We are delighted to welcome Chuck Stark to Columbus and to the Columbus Regional family,” said Eugene (Gene) Demonet, Chairman of the Columbus Regional Healthcare System Board of Directors. “He brings a wealth of experience to his new position as well as extensive accomplishments in facility and service line growth and development, physician relations, quality and patient safety, and customer and employee satisfaction.”

Mr. Stark was selected from among several dozen prospective candidates identified in a national search which began mid-summer. The Columbus Regional Board engaged Tyler & Company, an executive search firm specializing in health care. Max Brabson, Jr., retired Synovus Human Resources executive and member of the Columbus Regional Healthcare System Board, was Chairman of the Search Committee. The selection decision was made with input from the full board, representatives from the medical staff and the Columbus Regional senior management team.

Mr. Stark, 50, earned his undergraduate degree *cum laude* in 1983 from Duke University in Durham, N.C., with a major in Psychology. He completed his Master of Health Administration degree at Duke University in 1985. He has served in
numerous civic and professional leadership roles, including service as a board member for the Ohio Hospital Association and the Ohio Health Information Partnership. He was recognized as a 1993 “Up and Comer” by *Modern Healthcare* magazine. He is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Mr. Stark and his wife Julie, have two children – daughter Jessica who is a senior at Duke University and son Connor who is a freshman at Emory University in Atlanta.

**Larry Sanders Receives 2011 Big Voice for Children Award**
Larry Sanders, former Chairman and CEO of Columbus Regional, received a 2011 Big Voice for Children Award on Nov. 18th at the Four Seasons in Atlanta. The award, presented by Voices for Georgia’s Children, recognizes the advocacy work the honorees have done to significantly improve the lives of Georgia’s children. Penelope McPhee, board chair of Voices for Georgia’s Children and president of the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, presented the award to Mr. Sanders. Governor Nathan Deal gave welcoming remarks prior to the awards recognizing the state’s top child advocates.

Mr. Sanders’ child advocacy accomplishments include his work with physicians to create perinatal services, Level III maternity services, and a Women and Children’s Center serving Southwest Georgia and East Alabama. By developing these comprehensive pediatrics services, Columbus Regional has been able to attract a team of high quality neonatologists, pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists to the region, providing children in 20-plus counties with access to critical preventive, routine and emergency care. Mr. Sanders credited the commitment of Columbus Regional’s physicians, employees and volunteers for making this care possible.

**HUGHSTON HOSPITAL**
**Hughston Hospital Receives Prestigious Award from Press Ganey**
Press Ganey Associates, Inc. has named Hughston Hospital as a 2011 Summit Award® winner. The Summit Award recognizes top-performing facilities that sustain the highest level of patient satisfaction for three or more consecutive years. The Press Ganey Summit Award is the healthcare performance improvement industry’s most coveted symbol of achievement bestowed annually. Hughston Hospital is one of 98 nationwide organizations to receive this prestigious honor in 2011, and one of 87 to receive it for achieving and sustaining excellence in patient satisfaction.

Hughston Hospital is proud of this achievement, which reinforces its commitment to providing only the highest quality healthcare. The Press Ganey Summit Award is based on inpatient surveys. Patients rank the hospital in various categories, and a winning facility must be ranked overall above the 95th percentile for three consecutive years or more. Press Ganey currently partners with more than 10,000 healthcare facilities – including 50 percent of all U.S. hospitals – to measure and improve the quality of their care.
Only two rehabilitation hospitals in Georgia have earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval™ for Stroke Rehabilitation.

One is the Rehabilitation Center at Hughston Hospital in Columbus.

The Hughston Hospital and Rehabilitation Center is one of only two in the entire state of Georgia to achieve this certification from The Joint Commission. This prestigious designation demonstrates Hughston Hospital’s commitment to providing the highest level of care for its Stroke Rehabilitation patients.

From compliance with national standards to effective use of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines to an organized approach to performance measurement and improvement activities, our Stroke Rehabilitation program focuses on one goal—to help each patient return home as quickly as possible with the highest achievable level of function.

Our Hughston Spirit, combined with our expertise and state-of-the-art technology have made us Southwest Georgia’s leading rehabilitation hospital. Your health is our mission.
Vincent Nicolais, M.D., Receives Statewide Medical Award

Vincent M. Nicolais, M.D., FACP, FCCM, has been awarded The Mark Silverman, M.D., MACP Award by the Georgia Chapter, American College of Physicians. He was honored at the group’s annual meeting on Oct. 29. Dr. Nicolais is the Chief of Internal Medicine and Medical Director of Critical Care at The Medical Center.

The Mark Silverman Award of the American College of Physicians Georgia Chapter was established in 2010. It honors a Member, Fellow or Master who exemplifies devotion to his or her patients as well as students, residents and young physician members of the American College of Physicians. The award serves to recognize the nurturing attitude of a physician who has not only demonstrated excellence in bedside skills and teaching, but has served as an inspiration for younger physicians to advance their knowledge and training in medicine as well as their involvement in the Georgia Chapter of the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Nicolais came to The Medical Center in 1992. He is board certified in critical care, as well as internal medicine. Dr. Nicolais is a graduate of the University of Bologna, Italy. He completed his residency at New York Medical College, Westchester County Medical Center. Dr. Nicolais has served as the president of the Southeastern Region Society of Critical Care Medicine and has been a contributing editor to *Fundamental Critical Care Support and Fundamental Disaster Management* for the Society of Critical Care Medicine. He retains an appointment of Associate Community (Clinical) Professor of Medicine at Mercer University School of Medicine.

Dr. Nicolais is a recipient of the Laureate Award from the American College of Physicians and is the immediate past Governor of the Georgia Chapter of the American College of Physicians. Dr. Nicolais was also honored by the Georgia Chapter of the American College of Physicians at their annual meeting for his many accomplishments during his tenure as the chapter’s governor.

Maternal Fetal Medicine Welcomes Dr. Hill

Demetrice Hill, M.D., has joined Columbus Regional’s Maternal Fetal Medicine Center. Board certified in obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Hill received her medical degree from Louisiana State University Medical Center in New Orleans. Her undergraduate degree is from Dillard University, also located in New Orleans. Dr. Hill completed an internship and residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii and a maternal fetal medicine fellowship at Madigan Army Medical Center at Ft. Lewis, WA.

Dr. Hill has been serving her country in the U.S. Army since 1991. Her most recent assignment was at Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center at Fort Hood, Texas where she was Chief of the Perinatal Service. She was also Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Martin Army Community Hospital at Ft. Benning from 2002-2005.
Emergency and Trauma Center Project Wins Construction Award

The Emergency and Trauma Center at The Medical Center construction project has won a 2011 Obelisk Award for Excellence in Construction. The award was presented by the Associated Builders and Contractors of Alabama at a recent ceremony in Birmingham. The award honored the project and its construction company. The construction of the Emergency and Trauma Center was done by Robins & Morton, a Birmingham-based construction company. The Emergency and Trauma Center was selected as the winner in the category of healthcare projects ranging from $10-15 million. The Excellence in Construction Awards are given annually. Construction companies must have a home base in Alabama for their projects to be eligible for the award.

The entire Emergency and Trauma Center construction and renovation project increased the size of the previous Emergency Department by 160 percent. Phase I was completed in the spring of 2011 and created 23,668 square feet that includes 41 patient treatment rooms, 23 general treatment rooms, six trauma rooms, two digital x-rays rooms and a dedicated CT scanner. The Emergency and Trauma Center officially opened to the public on March 2, 2011. Phase 2 renovated the old Emergency Department, which was previously housed in 14,500 square feet, to create additional space for both patients and staff. It opened on Aug. 31, 2011. The entire construction and renovation project took nearly 22 months to complete.

CME Opportunities Offered for Physicians

Each of the following Continuing Medical Education (CME) opportunities for physicians has been approved for one hour of CME credit:

**Pediatric Grand Rounds:** Every Thursday, 8:15 a.m., Columbus Regional Conference Center at The Medical Center. Open to any physician or other health professional providing care for children. For more information, call Margaret Caldwell at 706-571-1220.

**Perinatal Grand Rounds:** Every 4th Tuesday, 9 a.m., 4th Floor, Neonatal Conference Room, The Medical Center. (Approved as a series.) Open to pediatricians and OB/GYN physicians. For more information, call Audrey Willis at 706-571-1112.

**Cancer Conference:** Every Monday, 12:30 p.m., Conference Center at the John B. Amos Cancer Center, except for first Monday which is held at Columbus Regional Conference Center at The Medical Center. (Approved as a series.) For more information, call David Fletcher at 706-571-1102.

The Medical Center is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The Medical Center designates this educational activity for a maximum of 1 Credit in Category I toward the AMA Physician’s Recognition Award. Each physician should claim only those credits that he/she actually spent in the educational activity.
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First year MCMS physician membership dues: $175
    Residents: $75

Our dues are billed through MAG and invoices have been mailed. If you have not received an invoice or would like an application to join, please contact Lisa Venable at 706-322-1254 or email lisavenable@muscogeemedical.org.

You can pay MAG and MCMS dues by check or credit card by contacting Kate Boyenga at MAG:

Mail dues payment to:
(Fidelity Bank, Attn: Lockbox Department, P.O. Box 105774, Atlanta, GA 30348)

Checks made payable to the “Medical Association of Georgia”

By fax 678.303.9264 or renew membership by phone with your credit card call Leslie Nevins at 678-303-9261!